

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

For the convenience of the Examiner, all claims have been presented whether or not an amendment has been made. The claims have been amended as follows:

1.     **(Currently Amended)** A method of using a computer system for on-line processing of merchandise returns for a plurality of merchants, comprising the steps of:  
        storing a set of return rules in a database for each of the plurality of merchants;  
        receiving, via the Internet, a return request representing a request by a customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise;  
        in response to receiving the return request from the customer, gathering transaction history data associated with the customer from a computerized database;  
        displaying the transaction history to the customer for selection of a particular item of merchandise within a listing of merchandise included in the transaction history;  
        receiving, from a customer, an electronic selection by a click on the particular item of merchandise in the displayed listing of merchandise, the electronic selection identifying the particular item of merchandise for returns processing;  
        in response to receiving the click on the particular item of merchandise in the listing of merchandise, using the set of return rules associated with the identified merchant and the transaction information to validate the return;  
        upon validating the return, electronically delivering data about the customer to the merchant associated with the return;  
        processing the return in accordance with the set of return rules associated with the merchant.
2.     **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, wherein the receiving step is performed via an Internet access tool associated with the customer.
3.     **(Cancelled)**
4.     **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing step is performed by determining if the return is valid.

5.     **(Original)** The method of Claim 4, further comprising step of notifying the customer, via the Internet, whether the return is valid.

6.     **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing step is performed by determining disposition of the item.

7.     **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing step is performed by determining a shipping destination of the item.

8.     **(Cancelled)**

9.     **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing step is performed by crediting an account of the customer.

10.    **(Cancelled)**

11.    **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a user interface to the customer, via an Internet access tool, wherein the user interface displays information associated with return of one or more items purchased by the customer.

12.    **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein the user interface displays a list of transactions associated with the customer, listing items for potential return by the customer.

13.    **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of downloading a return label to the customer via the Internet.

14.    **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of notifying a shipping agent of the return.

15. **(Currently Amended)** An on-line merchandise return system for processing merchandise returns for a plurality of merchants, comprising a computer system programmed to:

store a set of return rules in a database for each of the plurality of merchants;

receive a return request, via the Internet, representing a request by a customer to initiate a return at least one item of merchandise;

in response to receiving the return request from the customer, gather transaction history data associated with the customer from a computerized database;

display the transaction history to the customer for selection of a particular item of merchandise within a listing of merchandise included in the transaction history;

**receive, from a customer, an electronic selection by a click on the particular item of merchandise in the displayed listing of merchandise, the electronic selection identifying the particular item of merchandise for returns processing;**

**in response to receiving the click on the particular item of merchandise in the listing of merchandise,** use the set of return rules associated with the identified merchant and the transaction information to validate the return;

upon validating the return, electronically deliver data about the customer to the merchant associated with the return; and

process the return in accordance with the set of return rules associated with the merchant.

16. **(Cancelled)**

17. **(Currently Amended)** Software for facilitating online merchandise return services, the software embodied in a computer-readable medium and when executed operable to:

store a set of return rules in a database for each of the plurality of merchants;

receive, via the Internet, a return request representing a request by a customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise;

in response to receiving the return request from the customer, gather transaction history data associated with the customer from a computerized database;

display the transaction history to the customer for selection of a particular item of merchandise within a listing of merchandise included in the transaction history;

receive, from a customer, an electronic selection by a click on the particular item of merchandise in the displayed listing of merchandise, the electronic selection identifying the particular item of merchandise for returns processing;

in response to receiving the click on the particular item of merchandise in the listing of merchandise, use the set of return rules associated with the identified merchant and the transaction information to validate the return;

upon validating the return, electronically deliver data about the customer to the merchant associated with the return; and

process the return in accordance with the set of return rules associated with the merchant.

18. **(Cancelled)**

19. **(Currently Amended)** A method of using a computer for online merchandise returns, comprising the steps of:

receiving, from each of a plurality of merchants, a set of return rules representing merchandise return policies of each merchant;

storing the return rules in a database;

receiving, via the Internet, a return request representing a request by a customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise;

in response to receiving the return request from the customer, gathering transaction history data associated with the customer from a computerized database;

displaying the transaction history to the customer for selection of a particular item of merchandise within a listing of merchandise included in the transaction history;

**receiving, from a customer, an electronic selection by a click on the particular item of merchandise in the displayed listing of merchandise, the electronic selection identifying the particular item of merchandise for returns processing;**

**in response to receiving the click on the particular item of merchandise in the listing of merchandise,** using the set of return rules associated with the identified merchant to validate the return;

upon validating the return, processing the return in accordance with the set of return rules associated with the merchant.

20. **(Currently Amended)** An on-line merchandise return system for processing merchandise returns for a plurality of merchants, comprising a computer system programmed to:

receive, from each of a plurality of merchants, a set of return rules representing merchandise return policies of each merchant;

store the return rules in a database;

receive, via the Internet, a return request representing a request by a customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise;

in response to receiving the return request from the customer, gather transaction history data associated with the customer from a computerized database;

display the transaction history to the customer for selection of a particular item of merchandise within a listing of merchandise included in the transaction history;

**receive, from a customer, an electronic selection by a click on the particular item of merchandise in the displayed listing of merchandise, the electronic selection identifying the particular item of merchandise for returns processing;**

**in response to receiving the click on the particular item of merchandise in the listing of merchandise,** use the set of return rules associated with the identified merchant to validate the return;

upon validating the return, process the return in accordance with the set of return rules associated with the merchant.

21. **(Currently Amended)** Software for facilitating online merchandise return services for a plurality of merchants, the software embodied in a computer-readable medium and when executed operable to:

receive, from each of a plurality of merchants, a set of return rules representing merchandise return policies of each merchant;

store the return rules in a database;

receive, via the Internet, a return request representing a request by a customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise;

in response to receiving the return request from the customer, gather transaction history data associated with the customer from a computerized database;

display the transaction history to the customer for selection of a particular item of merchandise within a listing of merchandise included in the transaction history;

**receive, from a customer, an electronic selection by a click on the particular item of merchandise in the displayed listing of merchandise, the electronic selection identifying the particular item of merchandise for returns processing;**

**in response to receiving the click on the particular item of merchandise in the listing of merchandise,** use the set of return rules associated with the identified merchant to validate the return;

upon validating the return, process the return in accordance with the set of return rules associated with the merchant.

22. **(Previously Presented)** A method of using a computer system for on-line processing of merchandise returns, comprising the steps of:

in a first transaction associated with an online purchase of at least one item of merchandise, obtaining customer-specific return information from a customer associated with the at least one item of merchandise;

transmitting a client identifier to a client system associated with the customer;

in a second transaction, receiving, via the Internet, a return request representing a request by the customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise, the return request comprising the client identifier that uniquely identifies the client system from which the return request is received;

using the client identifier to identify the customer-specific return information;

processing the return in accordance with one or more return rules associated with the merchandise; and

electronically notifying a merchant of the return.

23. **(Original)** The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of electronically providing the merchant with information about the customer.

24. **(Previously Presented)** An on-line merchandise return system, comprising a computer system programmed to:

in a first transaction associated with an online purchase of at least one item of merchandise, obtain customer-specific return information from a customer associated with the at least one item of merchandise;

transmit a client identifier to a client system associated with the customer;

in a second transaction, receive, via the Internet, a return request representing a request by the customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise, the return request comprising the client identifier that uniquely identifies the client system from which the return request is received;

use the client identifier to identify the customer-specific return information;

process the return in accordance with one or more return rules associated with the merchandise; and

electronically notify the merchant of the return.



25. **(Original)** The method of Claim 24, wherein the system is further programmed to electronically provide the merchant with information about the customer.

26. **(Previously Presented)** Software for facilitating online merchandise return services, the software embodied in a computer-readable medium and when executed operable to:

in a first transaction associated with an online purchase of at least one item of merchandise, obtain customer-specific return information from a customer associated with the at least one item of merchandise;

transmit a client identifier to a client system associated with the customer;

in a second transaction, receive, via the Internet, a return request representing a request by the customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise, the return request comprising the client identifier that uniquely identifies the client system from which the return request is received;

use the client identifier to identify the customer-specific return information;

process the return in accordance with one or more return rules associated with the merchandise; and

electronically notify the merchant of the return.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The software of Claim 26, further operable to electronically provide the merchant with information about the customer.